

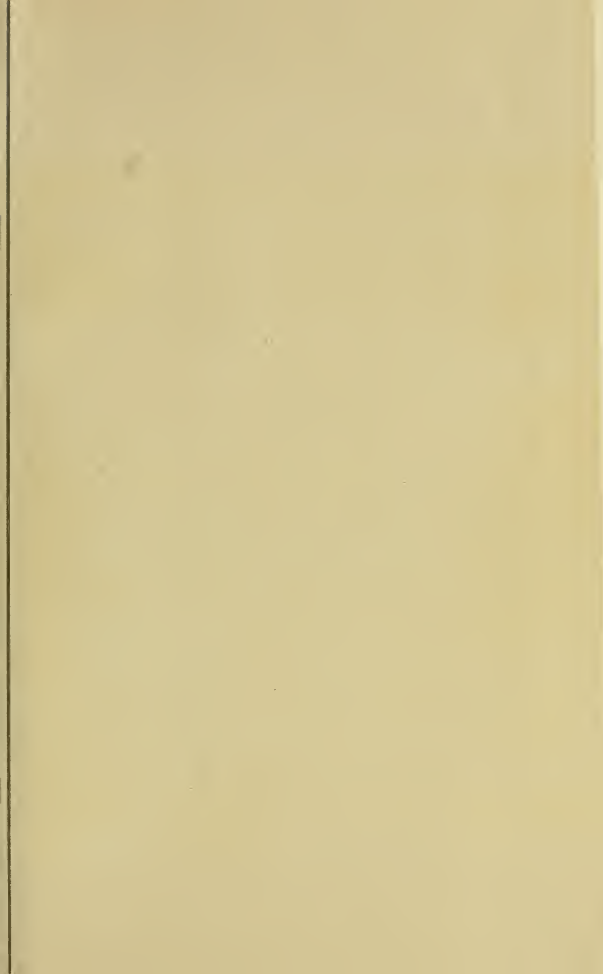
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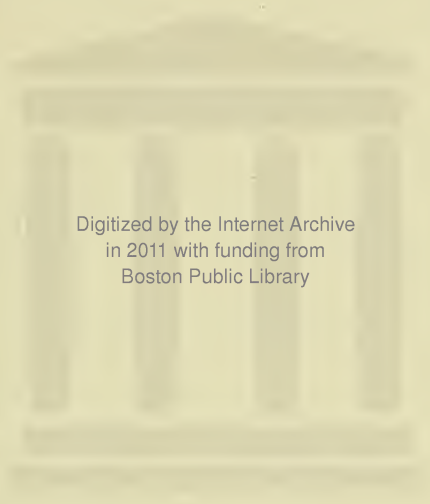
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GUIDE

— TO —

Wachusett Mountain,*PRINCETON,**Mass.*



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GUIDE

TO .

Wachusett Mountain,

WITH

Accompanying Map.

COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY

S. C. & M. H. BULLARD.

"

PRINCETON, MASS.

1872.

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Alice E Harrington
Oct. 6, 1942

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PREFACE.

IN compiling a Guide for Wachusett Mountain, the author has endeavored to supply a need already urgent, and which each season grows more pressing as the number of its visitors increases. Already their annual number far exceeds 10,000.

There is something so strange and foreign to nearly all visitors in a birdseye view from the mountain top, that they become somewhat confused, and for want of a reliable guide lose much of the pleasure and profit of a visit. Many of the mountains, villages and other objects of interest they have no name for, while others are incorrectly named.

The writer, familiar from boyhood with Wachusett and the topography of its surroundings, and whose later opportunities for correct observation of most of the territory it overlooks have been equaled by few, was surprised to find, in taking observations for the accompanying map, how much he had both to learn and to unlearn.

In compiling the accompanying map we have taken Wachusett as a centre, giving a circle of 45 miles radius. This gives a circle of 90 miles in diameter, containing the larger part of Massachusetts and portions of the four bordering states.

We have placed no village on the map not wholly or partially visible from Wachusett, hence several large villages near by are omitted.

In New England it is usual to call all our inland bodies of water *ponds*, except the very largest, while outside of New England, both in our own and other countries, the natural sheets of water are called *lakes*, the artificial, *ponds*. We have adopted the more universal name, partly because the distinction is familiar to a large portion of our visitors, but mainly because we can thereby furnish a more correct Guide; for some of our large reservoirs which are in full tide in June, are shorn of their fair proportions in August and September.

Some of the mountains in New Hampshire have been much christened. Some have two and some three local names. We have adopted those used by the New Hampshire State Survey.

The writer would acknowledge his deep obligations to Prof. Quimby of the New Hampshire State Survey, for his valuable assistance, and also to his other friends who have kindly aided him in his undertaking.

S. C. B.

Mount Wachusett.

HIDWAY between Massachusetts Bay and the Connecticut River a belt of broken hill country extends across the Old Bay State, whose higher peaks rise to the dignity of mountains.

Of these mountain peaks WACHUSETT is the crowning eminence. In height above the level of the sea second only to Greylock or Saddle Mountain, it far surpasses its loftier sister in the beauty and extent of its scenery.

Most of our higher mountains are hemmed in by ridges of less magnitude, but which are still high enough to intercept the view beyond. Wachusett, on the contrary, is environed by and overlooks detached hills, which detract little and add much to the scenery. Nearly all of our mountain districts are newly and sparsely settled; the land but little cultivated and the roads rough. This usual rule is also reversed in the case of the country around Wachusett.

Nearly two centuries ago, in spite of its rough and rocky hills, the Puritan settlers were attracted by its fertile soil, and their

thrifty descendants now till a highly cultivated country and form an opulent community.

The roads for so hilly a country are unusually good ; they abound in fine prospects and charming landscapes. The valleys are dotted here and there with picturesque lakes and ponds ; the mountain streams as they course along the meadows or tumble down the glens, turn many a wheel of industry ; while railroads stretch along the valleys and wind among the hills.

Wachusett is situated in the northerly part of Princeton, sixteen miles northwest of Worcester, ten southwest of Fitchburg and forty-eight a little north of west from Boston. Its height above the sea level has been the subject of much dispute. There was a wide discrepancy between the earlier barometrical observations, which varied from 2018 to 3000 feet. When Wachusett was occupied as a coast survey station in 1860, its true altitude was found to be between the two extremes, or 2480 feet. Being the nearest to the coast of our high mountains, it is often the first land seen from vessels approaching Boston Harbor.

Wachusett was a famous Indian resort. Their camping ground and rendezvous was on the northeast side, around a large, flat-topped rock near the margin of Wachusett Lake, a beautiful sheet of water which nestles close to

the side of its parent mountain. Here their council fires were lighted, expeditions planned, and treaties made; and here Mrs. Rowlandson, the white woman taken captive at Lancaster during King Philip's War, was finally ransomed.

There are three ways of ascending Wachusett. One from the north by way of Bolton's; a second on the east side, from Pine Hill by way of the Pine Hill House; a third is by the Coast Survey Road from the Mountain House on the southeast side. This, the most accessible route, is adopted by more than nine-tenths of the visitors. At the Mountain House the carriage road ends, but there is a well beaten track and practicable cart road to the summit, a little less than a mile distant.

In ascending from the Mountain House, we are already over 1200 feet above the level of the sea, or nearly half the altitude of Wachusett, and here we have a very commanding view, which will widen out as we ascend higher. Passing upward a somewhat steep path, we soon enter a pasture whose rocky hillsides abound with ferns, some of which are rare and beautiful. Here, too, thrive many sturdy old sugar maples, whose cooling shade is quite welcome in summer. That offshoot of Wachusett which branches out to the east, a little to the north of us, whose head is crested with forest, is Pine Hill, while Little Wachusett,

an equally high but bare hill, raises its head a mile to the south.

Until we reach the forest, which is one-third of the way up, the path has a northwest course. Here we turn a right angle, taking a northeast course over the steepest part of the route. Reaching a comparatively level spot, the road turns sharply to the west, then to the southwest, passing over a spur of the mountain, so that we reach the summit from the southwesterly side. This winding path gives the weary pedestrian an opportunity to enjoy some fine wayside views.

Perhaps the first impression the visitor receives on arriving at the summit, is wonder that in so thickly settled a community there should be so much forest or waste land. If that is the *first* impression, we may be pretty sure the *second* will be wonder that there is not more; so irregular, hilly, and unlevel is the country below. Save where some placid lake gleams in the sun, we see not one square foot of level surface, but instead, the whole panorama seems a jumble of hills and valleys, fields and forests, lakes and villages, strangely mixed together.

The view, too, is so little interrupted by surrounding hills, that it extends over portions of six states.

It has been claimed that from Wachusett three hundred villages and cities could be

seen. In taking observations for the map, the author intended to test the truth of this assertion, but the great labor and expense involved—quite out of proportion to the utility and value of the object,—compelled him to give up the undertaking.

Toward the south, the fact that we are looking toward the sun and consequently toward the shaded side, renders it difficult to discern any except prominent villages. Toward the west, in the Connecticut Valley, nearly all the distant villages are screened by the belt of high ground about twenty-five miles distant. To the north, the mountain ridges of New Hampshire, except in occasional vistas, also intercept the vision. But to the northeast, the east and southeast, within an angle extending from Dover, N. H., to Bridgewater, Mass., the great majority of villages from the interior to the seacoast are often to be seen.

Here we would remark that comparatively small, distant objects, like villages, are made much more distinct and prominent when the sun is at our backs and consequently lights up the side nearest us. Most of the distant villages are only visible when thus illuminated.

Hence points of interest toward the east are best seen when lighted up by the rays of the declining sun.

Often, in the afternoon of a clear, cool day,

the eastern horizon seems, to the naked eye, quite dotted over with villages. Many of these, which to the unassisted eye seem but a single village, are resolved by the telescope into several, some more remote than others. But the difficulty even an experienced eye finds in identifying the more distant villages is so great, that we have omitted on the map those of lesser prominence, as tending to confuse and fatigue the casual visitor.

It is unfortunate that the great majority of the visitors to Wachusett come only in the hottest months, when haze and smoke most abound. If they would come in May or early June, or better still, when the frosts have cleared the atmosphere in Autumn, that "crowning glory of the year," they would be repaid by a view far more magnificent than that of July or August.

On the highest point of Wachusett stands the Summit House, built and kept by Mr. Morse. This is crowned with an observatory which affords the finest views of the country below, and with his telescope and field glasses, is a great convenience to visitors.

Descriptive Guide.

AS we glance around us from the summit, we find the most conspicuous object to be a large mountain toward the northeast called the Grand Monadnock. As this prominent point can almost always be seen, we will take it as our starting point, and passing to the right, point out most of the noticeable objects below. It is called the "Grand Monadnock" because there are three "Monadnocks," of which this is the central and much the largest. It is a little north of northwest, and is a grim looking pile with sharply defined outlines, the peak being composed of bare precipitous rocks. Monadnock is said in the Indian Language to signify a "Peak of Rocks."

From the northern base of Monadnock a ridge stretches off to the northeast, sinking nearly into the horizon as it reaches the Ipswich Group. Near the eastern extremity of this ridge the crest of a distant mountain rises like a haycock above it. This is Sunapee, sixty miles distant. Toward Monadnock and four miles from us is Westminster, on the northeast margin of a fine sheet of water

called Meetinghouse Lake. Seven miles farther to the north is the village of Ashburnham, so shaded with trees we can see but little of it but its steeples, thus forming a contrast to its thriving sister, Winchendon, whose spires are not visible, but whose new-built streets are rising into notice. Beyond the New Hampshire line may be seen Rindge and Jaffrey, the latter almost in the shadow of Monadnock.

Passing eastward to where the Monadnock Ridge ends we find a cluster of mountains called the New Ipswich Group. The nearest and one of the most western is the Great Watatic, a round, steep mount, nearly covered with evergreens. A little to the North is a long, smooth ridge called Mt. Barrett. A little to the east of Barrett is another conical hill called Mt. Whittemore. North of the last another ridge, Mt. Kidder, trends to the northeast, while Temple Mountain, like a heartless rival, plants itself just beyond, overlooks and outflanks it, then saucily sweeping down into the valley to the northeast it joins hands and connects with Pack Monadnock, the mountain ridge to the northeast.

A little west of the lowest depression between Temple Mountain and Pack Monadnock you may see the conical head of a mountain loom up. This peak is the more noticeable because here in one line we can see two of New Hampshire's more noted mountains.

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These are Kearsarge, seventy miles, and Moosillauke, one hundred and twenty miles distant. Kearsarge has already become famous in our annals, from the gallantry of its namesake in our navy, which fought and sank that scourge of the seas, the rebel Alabama. So exactly does the more lofty and distant Moosillauke stand behind his warlike sister, that at best his crest appears like a thin veil above the fearless Kearsarge.

We have spoken of the Pack Monadnock, the mountain we see to the northeast of Temple and Kidder. The origin of its curious name is somewhat shrouded in doubt. Not that there is no account of it handed down, but that there are several different ones. All agree that it dates back to the time anterior to roads, when paths and pack horses were the means by which the early settlers conveyed their goods and chattels from the settlements to their forest homes. Whether the contour of the mountain had any striking resemblance to a packed horse, or whether a pack was here lost or one found, the reader has at least a choice of traditions.

Some distance to the east of Pack Monadnock we see two mountains side by side. These are the Uncanoomocs or Twin Mountains. A little farther to the west you see a single mountain called Lyndeboro Mountain. Towards this last mountain the ridge from

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Pack Monadnock slopes off to the northeast, till it terminates in a moderate sized mound midway between the two mountains. That mound is Pinnacle Mountain, and it stands in the direct line to the White Mountains one hundred and forty miles distant. In a clear day Mt. Washington may be seen directly behind Pinnacle, with its summit a little to the right and considerably higher, while clustering thick around it like a bodyguard, mainly a little to the west, are the shadowy forms of his companion peaks.

On the eastern side of Lyndeboro Mountain, and partially behind, we see the blue outline of a larger and more distant mountain. That is Gunstock, seventy-six miles distant, standing on the border of Lake Winnipiseogee. A little to the east of Gunstock and just west of the most western of the Twin Mountains is Catamount Mountain, of considerable magnitude, sixty-five miles distant.

Looking out from Wachusett a little north of northeast, towards Lyndeboro, we see a long, narrow pond, which at the farther end turns sharply to the left, forming an L.

This is the Reservoir pond of Wymansville, a few houses of which can be seen near the end of the L. Beyond we see the villages of Crockerville and Wachusett, while a little more to the left and more than twenty miles distant, we see Mason, N. H. Beyond Wa-

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chusett village, and nine miles from here, the winding valley that seems lined with villages, turns behind a hill with a curious ragged grey head, while a considerable cluster of houses nestles to its side on the left, and apparently a still larger village crops out on its right. That hill is Rollstone, and its ragged grey poll shows where it has been literally scalped by the granite quarrymen, while the village on the left is part of Fitchburg, that on the right South Fitchburg. A little to the left of Fitchburg, and more than thirty miles distant, may be seen Amherst, N. H.

About six miles to the east and a little to the right of Rollstone may be seen, on rising ground, the village of Lunenburg, which rejoices in the possession of two pretty lakes: one near the village, the other three miles to the south. Passing beyond the low range of Lunenburg Hills to the Townsend Valley, we notice a chain of villages running northwest and southeast. Here are Groton, West Groton, Townsend Harbor, Townsend and West Townsend, while a few miles beyond are Pepperell and Dunstable, and farther still may be seen Hollis and Nashua.

Returning to our starting place and looking east, we see a long, narrow pond stretching north and south close to the foot of the mountain. This is Paradise Pond, and its name may mislead, for it is not the most favored of

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our ponds. The little Rocky Lake that we see two miles beyond, almost hidden in the dense forest, far excels it in beauty. The large irregular sheet of water that we see six miles away to the northeast is a reservoir.

The long, high hill a little south of this reservoir, whose forest clad sides are darkly tinted with evergreens, is Wanoosnoc Hill, and the beautiful village to the right and just beyond, which seems fairly embosomed with hills, is Leominster. Beyond Leominster we may see in succession Ayer, Lyttleton, Chelmsford and Lowell, and beyond, with a fine, clear afternoon and a good telescope, most of the villages in Essex and Rockingham Counties. Ten miles farther, and a little to the south of Leominster, may be seen on high ground, the villages of Still River and Harvard, and beyond those Acton, South Acton and Carlisle.

Returning and taking another new departure, the awkward looking village that we see straggling around the edge of a ravine, three miles to the southeast of us, is East Princeton. The sheet of water we see a little east of it is Stewart's Pond, and the high hill to the left of it is Justice Hill. The village of Sterling is quite hidden by Fitch Hill, but turning eastward twelve miles to the Nashua Valley we see another chain of villages; North Lancaster, Lancaster, South Lancaster and the large

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and showy village of Clinton. Beyond Lancaster, may be seen Bolton, Stowe, Hudson and Concord ; and the long, high ridge we see beyond, which forms one of our eastern landmarks, is Prospect Hill, in Waltham. Prospect Hill, or Mt. Prospect as it is sometimes called, is almost in the direct line to Boston, and to a certain extent intercepts the view, but the loftier objects, and South Boston, Charlestown and the villages north and south are, in tolerably clear weather, visible. The chimneys of South Boston, that of the Navy Yard, and even ships under full sail are easily seen. Not so with Bunker Hill Monument. Its tint is so nearly that of the ocean beyond, that it can rarely be seen except when it glistens in the sun.

Over South Lancaster may be seen, in the blue distance, a regular moundlike hill. This, the Blue Hill of Milton, fifty-five miles distant, is another of the seaboard landmarks, and except in hazy weather can almost always be seen. In quite clear weather the villages about Blue Hill and many far beyond and south of it are plainly visible.

Beyond Clinton we see West Berlin and Berlin, while quite above them sits Marlboro, a city on a hill. Perhaps I should say a city on two hills, for literally there seems to be a wide gulf between the two wings. These two villages of Marlboro have settled down togeth-

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er in so friendly a manner we trust they are not rivals, and that they do not, like some neighbors, scold across the way. A little beyond and to the right of Marlboro may be seen a small village with a single prominent church. This is Southboro, while beyond and a little farther to the right is Ashland.

The two lakes that add so much to the landscape, eight miles away to the southeast, are the Washacum Lakes, in Sterling.

Sterling Junction, a railroad station, and noted for its annual Camp-meetings, is close by on the right, but quite screened by the woods. The valley, a little farther to the right, down which we look and where we occasionally get glimpses of ponds of water, is the valley of the South Branch of the Nashua and the two cosy villages we see in it are Oakdale and West Boylston. As the valley meanders around West Boylston to the east and northeast, we see beyond it, and to the left of West Boylston, a small but conspicuous village. This is Boylston. To the right, and five miles beyond, is Northboro', while between the last two villages, but far beyond, may be discerned the spires of Westboro' and Holliston. Almost directly over Boylston, but fifteen miles beyond, glistens in the sun, Hopkinton, another "City on a Hill."

Some distance to the right of Boylston peering above a tract of woodland, is the village of Shrewsbury, while as much farther to

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the right but considerably beyond, stands Grafton, another large and showy hill village. A little to the west of Grafton may be seen New England Village, while quite beyond we may see several villages as we look down the Blackstone Valley.

Glancing farther to the right, and about sixteen miles distant, the straggling, but quite picturesque city that we see, is Worcester. Twenty-five years ago Worcester was represented on Wachusett only by two or three church spires, and by the College of the Holy Cross and was difficult to point out. Even now few public buildings can be seen. But so many of her handsome suburban streets have scaled the surrounding hills that she already sits in the landscape like a Queen in the South.

Returning to our starting point and looking toward the south, the high bare hill we see, one and a half miles distant, is Little Wachusett. From this eminence a high ridge sweeps out, with an occasional depression, several miles south. Its highest point almost conceals the beautiful village of Princeton, two and a half miles distant.

Seven miles beyond Princeton, in the midst of an expanse of comparatively level country so clothed with wood that it looks like an immense forest, are seen the two spires of the village of Holden. This quiet, staid village of Holden, which to the visitor on Wachusett, al-

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ways looked as if it had never been able to get out of the woods, under the stimulus of railroad facilities seems to be taking a new departure.

A little to the west of Princeton, and five miles exactly south from us, we see a pretty sheet of water—Quinnipoxet Lake. Beyond this and just in front of another sheet of water, is Eagleville. Still keeping due south, we notice a smooth, bare hill, the loftiest eminence in that direction, called Asnebumskit. Just over the western edge of this hill, a single prominent church spire represents the village of Leicester. Far beyond, several villages in Connecticut are sometimes visible, but as we see them on the shaded side, they can rarely be identified.

The village a little to the northwest of Asnebumskit is Paxton, and that nearly over Paxton and fifteen miles beyond, is Charlton. A little to the northwest of Paxton is a high, abrupt, wood covered hill, called Turkey Hill, and just to the right of that and beyond, is Spencer. Looking farther to the right, and about nine miles distant, we see Rutland, a small village perched upon a high hill, and still farther to the west, and six miles beyond, is another small village, Oakham. Between these last two villages, and farther away, is seen the larger village of North Brookfield. Beyond, and a little to the right of Oakham,

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KEENE, - N. H.

and almost exactly southwest of where we stand, is New Braintree.

Looking beyond, and a little to the west of New Braintree, we see a high hill in the town of Hardwick, called Mt. McDougal, while a little to the left of McDougal, looking through a depression between the hills, is seen Ware Mountain, an offshoot of the Holyoke range.

Turning back, and still farther to the west, we come to Barre, twelve miles distant, a large village, on a high hill. Barre is not singular in that respect. The early settlers to the southwest and west of us were evidently a hardy and highminded people; men who feared neither bleak winds nor drifting snows, and who disdained to plant their villages in valleys so long as commanding eminences could be found. Thanks to that peculiarity of theirs for adding much to the beauty of the scenery.

Over Barre lies Mt. Holyoke and Mt. Tom, but their crests do not rise sufficiently above the intervening hills to distinctly point them out. Half way from us to Barre, but a little to the south, we see glimpses of Asneconcomick Lake. This is the largest of the lakes in the vicinity and yields to none in beauty.

A little to the north of this last lake, Moosehorn, forms a still more prominent feature in the landscape, while a little to the left of Moosehorn, in the distance may be seen the villages of Dana and Prescott.

Three miles to the west of Moosehorn, on

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high ground, is the village of Hubbardston. A little to the north of Hubbardston, almost due west, fifteen miles distant, is the village of Petersham. A little to the north of Petersham and beyond, is New Salem, and still beyond and to the northward is the village of Wendell. Over Wendell may be seen Greylock or Saddle Mountain, the highest summit in the State, eighty miles distant. Greylock is beyond the Hoosac Range, almost the highest peak of which is overlooked by its dome-like head.

As the eye sweeps north over the Hoosac range, it here meets with a considerable elevation, which ends about five degrees farther north in a sudden depression or gap. Greylock lifts its conical crest just south of the centre of this elevation and is in the exact line of the Hoosac Tunnel.

Taking a new departure, the sheet of water we see at the foot of the mountain on the west is Whitney's Pond, while the village, twelve miles farther on, that we see rising above a wood northeast of Petersham, is Phillipston. Somewhat nearer and a little to the right of Phillipston, and directly over a pond five miles distant, is Templeton, while a mile and a half east of the last village is East Templeton. Looking upward to the horizon from between these two villages we may see Mt. Grace, thirty miles distant. A little to the right of East Templeton, looking down the

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And in short it

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valley of Otter River, we see in the order of distance, Jonesville and Baldwinsville. Raising our eyes from this last village, about thirty-five miles distant we see Rattlesnake Mountain, and lifting them higher still to the Green Mountain Range, we notice one of its more important peaks, Mt. Stratton. Turning again to the right, and just to the right of a pond eight miles distant, we see the village of South Gardner, and a little to the right of that is Gardner. Looking over Gardner, thirty miles distant we may see Little Monadnock. A little to the right of this mountain, and somewhat nearer, is the village of Fitzwilliam, and to the right of that is an abrupt rocky ridge, a continuation of Grand Monadnock, which rejoices in the name of Gap Mountain.

We have now passed around the circle to our starting place, the Grand Monadnock.

In our description we have passed lightly over the distant villages because for the Tourist they may be quite as readily located by reference to the map. Our plan has been to point out the prominent points in the environs. Should any visitor wish a closer inspection of any part of the field, we trust the landmarks we have given will materially aid him in the analysis.

Routes for Reaching Wachusett.

There are several railroad routes which will bring the tourist to the near vicinity of Wachusett.

The Boston, Barre and Gardner Railroad, connecting Worcester with Gardner, passes through Princeton. Stages connect with the several trains at Princeton Station for Princeton and the Mountain House, four miles distant. At Worcester this Road connects with all the roads centering there, and at Gardner with the Vermont & Mass. R. R. for Greenfield, Brattleboro' and Hoosac Tunnel.

The Worcester & Nashua R. R., connecting Worcester with central New Hampshire, passes to the east. Its station for the Mountain House is Oakdale, nine miles distant, where private conveyance can be obtained.

The Boston, Clinton & Fitchburg R. R. connects Fitchburg and the railroads centering there with Boston, Taunton, New Bedford, and Providence. Tourists and excursion parties taken by private conveyance to Wachusett Mountain over the favorite Forest Road from Leominster or Fitchburg stations, nine miles distant.

The Vermont and Massachusetts R. R., connecting Boston and Fitchburg with the Connecticut Valley, passes six miles to the northeast. Passengers from the east can take private conveyance from Wachusett Station, six miles distant. Passengers from the West can take Boston, Barre & Gardner R. R. at Gardner for Princeton.

ROUTES BY PUBLIC ROADS.

Where one can conveniently do so, unquestionably the most delightful way of taking a trip to Wachusett and its environs, is by one's own conveyance. Massachusetts surpasses all her sister states in the excellence of her public roads. Even in the broken hill country the traveller finds the highways unusually good, while the great variety in the landscape affords many beautiful and picturesque views.

Either route you take from the seaboard takes one through several delightful and thrifty villages, and among the hills and valleys the roadside teems with an unusual variety of trees, shrubs, flowers and ferns. As one ascends to the high ground the air grows more bracing and the heat less oppressive. At the Mountain House the mercury in the thermometer rarely rises as high as 84 degrees, and even then the mountain breeze which stirs at nightfall, almost always renders a thick coat desirable.

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To residents of Essex and the Northern part of Middlesex Counties, a pleasant route is via Groton and Fitchburg. This is a very pleasant route; and if the traveller wishes to stop by the way at Fitchburg, he will find excellent hotel accommodations at the American House.

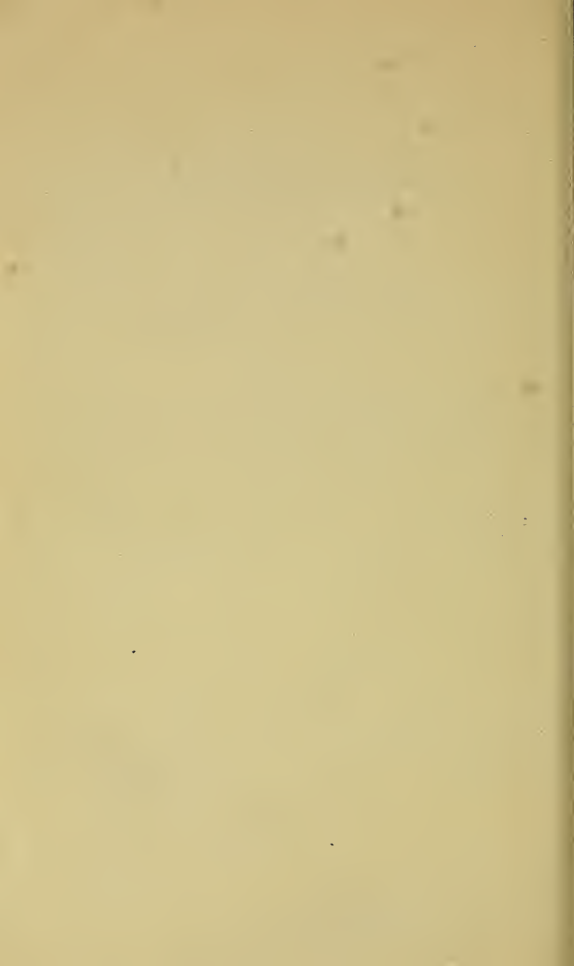
North of Boston a good route is via Concord and Lancaster, twelve miles from Wachusett Mountain, where there is a good hotel for those who do not wish to drive through in one day.

South of Boston another route is via Framingham, and either Marlboro or Northboro to Clinton, twelve miles from the Mountain, where a good hotel is kept.

From Providence and the vicinity the shortest and easiest route is via the Blackstone Valley and Worcester, sixteen miles distant.

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